Council of Historical Research could give grants for purchase of xerox machines to financially weak and historically rich institutions to be identified by the group mentioned in para (ii) above and thereby encourage reprography or duplication of material already on the verge of extinction. The National Archives of India should, also as an urgent measure, take up a project for microfilming such materials.

Standing Committee's views:

The Archival Policy Resolution issued by the Government of India in 1972 provides that "all records and files selected for permanent preservation should be transferred to the National Archives of India 25 years after being closed or recorded, as laid down in the Manual of Office Procedure". Accordingly the records of the Central Government in the custody of the Botanical Survey of India and Geological Survey of India are to be transferred to the National Archives of India. The National Archives of India is in correspondence with the aforesaid institutions in this behalf.

The remaining institutions referred to in the Explanatory Note are either autonomous or private bodies and as such National Archives of India may be approached to tender technical advice to these institutions, if and when required.

5.2.9.2.1.2

Preservation of the National Sample Survey Records in the Department of Statistics

Resolution by Dr. D.P. Bhattacharya

Resolved that the Commission moves the Department of Statistics for preservation of the National Sample Survey Records in a proper form.

Explanatory Note: The National Sample Survey started in 1950 jointly at the initiative of the late Professor P.C. Mahalanobis and Dr. C.D. Deshmukh with the blessings of late Jawaharlal Nehru. It is the only large scale scientific sample survey on a continuous basis in the world. It throws a flood of light on social, economic and cultural life of the country on a quantitative basis. The National Sample Survey was taken over by the Government of India from the Indian Statistical Institute around 1970. Records are partly lying with the Institute and partly with the Government. It is understood that preservation has become a problem.

Though the records are not 30 years old, a lack of preservation and consequent damage and destruction of records will be a national loss as it will deprive the future socio-economic historian from using one of the most authentic sources of data. The Commission may, therefore, take steps to examine the position and to move towards a gradual takeover to prevent any possible loss or damage.

Standing Committee's views

Under the Archival Policy Resolution records of permanent value can be transferred to the National Archives of India after due appraisal only if they are 25 years old.

The Survey was under the administrative control of the Indian Statistical Institute, an autonomous body, till 1970, and thereafter has become a Government organisation and is under the control of Department of Statistics and as such the Central Government records in its custody do not

appear to be more than two decades old. The National Archives of India may, however, be approached for technical advice, if necessary.

5.2.9.2.1.3
Preservation of Vital Records

Resolution by Prof. S.A.I. Tirmizi:

Resolved that the vital records pertaining to births and deaths spread all over the country be properly preserved by the Registrar-General and microfilms thereof be made available to scholars for purposes of research.

Explanatory Note: The vital records constitute an important source for demographic studies. Their importance has been realised in the western countries and this material is being increasingly utilised by research scholars for demographical studies. In India, such studies have not been undertaken primarily because such records are not available for purposes of research. In fact, very little is known about the state of their preservation, It is apprehended that if no steps are initiated to preserve them on scientific lines immediately, this important source material will be lost to posterity. In order to promote research in demographic studies, it is imperative that records of deaths and births are microfilmed after suitably blackouting the reasons of death of individuals which cannot be revealed under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969. These microfilm copies could be kept with the Genealogical Society of India which is at present headquartered at the National Archives of India.

Standing Committee's Views:

Clause 17 of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 provides that "(1) Subject to any rules made in this